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URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF MINEHEAD

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R E P O R T

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1961

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The Registrar General's figure for the population of the town is 7,490; the figure for 1960 was 7,470. It is probable that during the summer holidays this figure is more than doubled. The seasonal increase usually commences in June and continues until September. There are also minor variations at Easter and Christmas. The large majority of the hotels, boarding houses and apartments close down for the winter months.

In my report for 1960 I alluded to discussion taking place with regard to the possibility of the establishment of a Holiday Camp in Minehead by Messrs. Butlin's Limited. Ultimately the discussion crystallised in a public meeting held at the Regal Ballroom on the 29th November. At this meeting it appeared that the majority of the town were in favour of the Holiday Camp being established and of the Council continuing their deliberations in this direction.

The Council resolved that the Planning Authority be informed that, subject to the imposition of certain specified conditions, the Council unanimously considered that planning consent should be granted. On the 30th December, 1960 the County Planning Authority informed the Ministry of Housing and Local Government that, whilst the Planning Authority were prepared to approve the proposal, subject to specified conditions, it appeared that the consent of the Minister was necessary as the proposal was considered to be a substantial departure from the County Development Plan. The Ministry agreed with this view and "called the proposal in" for decision by the Minister.

Following upon a public inquiry on the 9th May, 1961 by an Inspector appointed by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, the application was approved by the Ministry subject to certain conditions.

The presentation of this short summary of events leading up to the status in quo I have conceived to be necessary in view of the repercussions on the essential services associated with the eruption of between two and five thousand people on a given date and the arrangements necessary to meet their requirements. That the whole scheme extends over the years 1960, 1961 and 1962 makes the problem infinitely more difficult and almost impossible to make it intelligible in the small space available in my Annual Report.

#### WATER SUPPLY

The water supply of Minehead during the year 1961 was satisfactory. The supply itself has caused no anxiety; it is of good quality and entirely adequate in quantity. The accompanying table of the examination of specimens taken from widely different parts of the supply demonstrates its excellence bacteriologically and chemically.

During the period under discussion some public anxiety was expressed as to the degree of radio-activity, particularly with regard to any deleterious effect on the consumers. We were informed that the general survey had been completed and that no further routine examinations would take place. However, subsequently, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government decided to make an exception in the matter of Nutscale and the Minehead water supply. With the assistance of your Public Health Inspector, Mr. Symes, who collaborated in the collection of material and samples over a period of three months, the water was found to be perfectly fit for human consumption and compared favourably with other impounded water supplies. I am very grateful to the Ministry for their assistance in this matter and for making an exception in so doing.

Questions have arisen, though not entirely germane to this report, as to the possibility of some shortage of the water supply owing to the additional increase in the population due to the Holiday Camp. The Surveyor has indicated that he does not anticipate any insurmountable difficulties in this direction owing, to a certain extent, to the increased water from the borehole in Moor Brake. The necessary arrangements concerning the new borehole are partly included in 1961, but it is sufficient at the present time to indicate that they have progressed satisfactorily.

Waste and leakage of water have received attention and very satisfactory results have been achieved in dealing with this, and your Surveyor reports a considerable saving of water.



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| RAW WATER         |                     |                   |                     | TREATED AFTER GOING INTO SUPPLY |                     |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Bacteriological   |                     | Chemical          |                     | Bacteriological                 |                     | Chemical          |                     |
| Satis-<br>factory | Unsatis-<br>factory | Satis-<br>factory | Unsatis-<br>factory | Satis-<br>factory               | Unsatis-<br>factory | Satis-<br>factory | Unsatis-<br>factory |
| 36                | 18                  | 6                 | -                   | 49                              | 2                   | -                 | -                   |

The water is supplied to the public direct from the mains, either direct to the houses or by means of standpipes. It will be seen from the accompanying table the manner of its distribution.

| Number of Dwelling<br>Houses ... | DIRECT TO THE HOUSES |                    |         | BY MEANS OF STANDPIPES |                    |         |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------|------------------------|--------------------|---------|
|                                  | Public               | Water<br>Companies | Private | Public                 | Water<br>Companies | Private |
|                                  | 2,647                | -                  | 8       | 10                     | -                  | -       |

### SWIMMING POOLS

There is one Swimming Pool situated on the sea front which is privately owned. This pool is filled with sea water which undergoes chlorination before being admitted to the Pool. The filtration and chlorination plant are under skilled management, and the engineer is on duty the whole of the time the bath is in operation. Frequent testing indicated that the water carried the necessary amount of residual chlorine to ensure a safe bathing water. Samples submitted from time to time were all found to be satisfactory.

The efficiency of the management of the Swimming Pool and the condition of the bathing water have at no time given rise to any anxiety.

### SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE

Much progress has been made by the Council during 1961. The question of solving the problem of sewage disposal, storm water drainage, beach pollution and flooding are all included in this problem. The urgency of its solution has been realised. Expert advice has been taken and considered. A plan has been approved in principle, but to meet all the demands, plus a new factor, that is, a new Holiday Camp, adjustments will have to be made and are being made to cope with the demands of a sudden influx of a temporary population with a ceiling of five thousand.

Before an expert opinion could be obtained further investigation was required. The investigation included the carrying out of float tests to obtain the necessary information as to tides, flow and timing. This was carried out. The inclusion of the drainage from the Holiday Camp in the general scheme called for further alteration in the original plan and a special report was required from Messrs. John Taylor & Sons, the Consulting Engineers who were dealing with the present situation. Necessary modifications in the plan were discussed by your Council at various meetings and the ultimate action decided upon will appear during 1962. It would seem that the final plan of the Consulting Engineers, if accepted by the Council, will be satisfactorily dealt with and all that will remain to be settled will be in the area of finance.

Your Surveyor, Mr. Holman, assures me that, with the special arrangements which he has made for the Holiday Camp sewage disposal, he does not anticipate any serious trouble before it is incorporated in the final plan for the town.



The Public Abattoir, which for many years, has been the responsibility of your Council, has come to an end. The manner of its passing was fraught with considerable difficulty, and discussion took place by those concerned - the Williton Rural District Council, the Watchet Urban District Council and your own Urban District Council of Minehead.

In July 1960 the three districts concerned with the Public Abattoir, implemented by the Minehead Urban District Council, discussed its fate. The Public Abattoir required very considerable alterations to fulfil the necessary requirements of the Regulations, and it was decided that, in view of the inevitable difficulties, each of the districts should present their report separately to the Ministry and act thereon for themselves.

Incidentally the lease of the Public Abattoir property expired about this time and it seemed well that the whole problem should be dealt with at the same time. With the Ministry's consent it was agreed that as far as the Minehead Urban District Council was concerned only one of the Minehead butchers required a slaughter house, the others having made other arrangements. This one butcher applied for a licence to plan and build a slaughter house on a site approved by the Planning Committee. Owing to difficulties in completing this building by the date given, that being the 31st December, 1961, this was finally fixed for the 30th June, 1962. This was made possible by the courtesy of the owner of the property, who allowed the abattoir to be used until this date.

As a sequela of the closing of the Public Abattoir it must be realised that the supervision of the meat supplied to Minehead by the surrounding district will no longer be dealt with by your Public Health Inspector at the time of slaughter as in the past, but may not come under his purview until it arrives at the various butchers' shops. The circumstances of the slaughtering also will not be in his control.

From the point of view, therefore, of hygiene, sanitary supervision and meat inspections, one cannot help regretting the necessity of this step, but it often happens that it is difficult to assess the comparative value of the public weal and finance.

#### MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

Meat is prepared for human food at the Minehead Abattoir from where it is distributed throughout the districts of Minehead, Watchet and Williton. So far as it is practical, all animals are inspected before slaughter, and all carcasses and offal are inspected in accordance with instructions laid down in Memo. 62 Foods, and appropriate action taken when required.

All places where food is prepared, etc., including the Abbatoir, shops, stalls and vehicles, are inspected from time to time and action taken as required. Generally the cleanliness of these establishments and vehicles is satisfactory.

A list of premises used in this context, in alphabetical order, follows:-

|                      |    |                                       |    |
|----------------------|----|---------------------------------------|----|
| Bakehouses ... ..    | 2  | Dairy Shops ... ..                    | 3  |
| Bakers' Shops ... .. | 4  | Fishmongers ... ..                    | 4  |
| Butchers ... ..      | 8  | Fried Fish Shops ... ..               | 2  |
| Cafes... ..          | 20 | Fruiterers and<br>Greengrocers ... .. | 9  |
| Chemists ... ..      | 5  | Grocers ... ..                        | 31 |
| Clubs, etc. ... ..   | 12 | Hostels ... ..                        | 1  |
| Canteens ... ..      | 2  | Hotels with<br>Restaurants ... ..     | 11 |
| Church Halls ... ..  | 6  | Hotels, Residential                   | 43 |
| Confectioners ... .. | 8  | Licensed Premises ... ..              | 9  |
| Dairies ... ..       | 1  | Pie Factory ... ..                    | 1  |

The number of inspections given to these premises was 630 during the year.

The care, cleanliness and compliance with the Food Hygiene Regulations of these premises was found to be satisfactory.



No prosecutions were made during the year.

The method of disposal of such food as is condemned is by burying. No large quantities of food were dealt with.

MEAT INSPECTION, 1961  
CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED

Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part during year:-

|                                                                                                 | Cattle<br>excluding<br>Cows | Cows | Calves | Sheep<br>and<br>Lambs | Pigs  | Horses |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------|--------|-----------------------|-------|--------|
| Number killed (if known)                                                                        | 459                         | 24   | 133    | 3,390                 | 1,159 | -      |
| Number Inspected                                                                                | 459                         | 24   | 133    | 3,390                 | 1,159 | -      |
| <u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u>                                          |                             |      |        |                       |       |        |
| Whole carcases condemned                                                                        | -                           | -    | -      | 2                     | 1     | -      |
| Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned                                              | 15                          | 3    | -      | 26                    | 20    | -      |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci | 3                           | 12.5 | -      | 0.8                   | 1.8   | -      |
| <u>Tuberculosis only</u>                                                                        |                             |      |        |                       |       |        |
| Whole carcases condemned                                                                        | -                           | -    | -      | -                     | -     | -      |
| Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned                                              | 1                           | -    | -      | -                     | 12    | -      |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis                                   | 0.2                         | -    | -      | -                     | 0.1   | -      |
| <u>Cysticercosis</u>                                                                            |                             |      |        |                       |       |        |
| Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned                                              | -                           | -    | -      | -                     | -     | -      |
| Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration                                                | -                           | -    | -      | -                     | -     | -      |
| Generalised and totally condemned                                                               | -                           | -    | -      | -                     | -     | -      |
| Weight of meat condemned (in lbs.) for:-                                                        |                             |      |        |                       |       |        |
| (a) Tuberculosis                                                                                | 45                          | -    | -      | -                     | 132   | -      |
| (b) Cysticercosis                                                                               | -                           | -    | -      | -                     | -     | -      |
| (c) Other                                                                                       | 198                         | 64   | -      | 197                   | 170   | -      |
| Total (in lbs.) condemned                                                                       | 243                         | 64   | -      | 197                   | 302   | -      |

MILK

The milk supply during the year was satisfactorily maintained. Samples were taken from time to time by the County Milk Sampling Officers.

- (a) The total number of Registered Distributors was five.
- (b) The total number of Registered Dairy Premises (other than Dairy Farms) was one.



MANUFACTURE OF ICE CREAM

The regulations governing this manufacture and the requirements implicit in them have tended to restrict the preparation of ice cream to the large wholesale houses. The distributors find it more profitable to purchase their ice cream in bulk.

The number of Premises registered for:-

|                            |     |    |
|----------------------------|-----|----|
| Manufacture and Retail ... | ... | 8  |
| Manufacture only ...       | ... | 0  |
| Retail only ...            | ... | 49 |

HOUSING

The total number of houses is 2,666. During the year 38 houses were erected by private enterprise. There were no houses erected by the Local Authority. Thirty houses were in course of erection by private enterprise at the close of the year.

The total number of applicants for Council Houses at the end of the year was approximately 126.

There was no case of overcrowding.

| Number of Post-War Houses erected from 1st April 1945 to 31st December, 1961 |                                                        | Housing Programme for 1962 |                                                  |                                                       |                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| By Local Authority                                                           |                                                        | By Private Enterprise      |                                                  | For slum clearance                                    | For other purposes |
| 243                                                                          |                                                        | 224                        |                                                  | Nil                                                   | 12 Flats           |
| No. of permanent dwellings in District as at 31/12/60<br>(a)                 | Gained from conversions and erected during 1961<br>(b) | Total<br>(a) - (b)         | Less houses demolished, closed, etc. during year | No. of permanent dwellings in district as at 31/12/61 |                    |
|                                                                              |                                                        |                            |                                                  | L.A.                                                  | P.E.               |
| L.A. 347<br>P.E. 2,280                                                       | -<br>39                                                | 347<br>2,319               | Nil<br>1                                         | 347                                                   | 2,318              |
| Totals 2,627                                                                 | 39                                                     | 2,666                      | 1                                                |                                                       |                    |

OLD PEOPLE'S DWELLINGS

| Number erected to 31.12.61 |                                        | No. in course of erection |                            | Number of Applicants for Old People's Dwellings                    |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| With County Council Aid    | Without County Council Aid             | With County Council Aid   | Without County Council Aid |                                                                    |
| -                          | 40 (included in Post-War houses above) | -                         | -                          | 65 (included in the figure for 126 applications for Council Houses |

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS Discretionary

Number of applications and houses dealt with by Local Authority during year:-

| Received     |                  | Approved     |                  |
|--------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Applications | No. of Dwellings | Applications | No. of Dwellings |
| 1            | 1                | 1            | 1                |

Number of applications approved in respect of owner-occupiers during the year was one.

|                                                |     |     |      |
|------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|
| Average cost per dwelling approved during year | ... | ... | £450 |
| Amount of grant payable by Local Authority     | ... | ... | £225 |



IMPROVEMENT GRANTS Standard

1. Number of Applications (a) Received ... 15  
(b) Approved ... 13
2. Number of Houses where Standard Amenities have been provided ... 13 (during year)

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 TO 1959  
PART 1 OF THE ACT

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspector).

|                                                                                                                    | Number on Register | Inspections | Number of Written | Occupiers Prosecuted |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| (i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ...                       | 9                  | 6           | -                 | -                    |
| (ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ... ..                    | 56                 | 64          | 2                 | -                    |
| (iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises) ... .. | -                  | -           | -                 | -                    |
|                                                                                                                    | 65                 | 70          | 2                 | -                    |

2. Cases in which Defects were found:-

|                          | Number of cases in which defects were found |          |                   |                   | Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
|                          | Found                                       | Remedied | Referred          |                   |                                                       |
|                          |                                             |          | To H.M. Inspector | by H.M. Inspector |                                                       |
| Want of cleanliness ...  | -                                           | -        | -                 | -                 | -                                                     |
| Overcrowding ... ..      | -                                           | -        | -                 | -                 | -                                                     |
| Unreasonable temperature | -                                           | -        | -                 | -                 | -                                                     |
| Inadequate ventilation   | -                                           | -        | -                 | -                 | -                                                     |

Number of cases in which defects were found:-

| Particulars                                                                      | Found | Remedied | Referred          |                   | Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                  |       |          | To H.M. Inspector | By H.M. Inspector |                                                       |
| Ineffective drainage ...                                                         |       |          |                   |                   |                                                       |
| Sanitary Convenience:                                                            |       |          |                   |                   |                                                       |
| (a) Insufficient ... ..                                                          |       |          |                   |                   |                                                       |
| (b) Unsuitable or defective                                                      |       |          |                   |                   |                                                       |
| (c) Not separate for sexes                                                       |       |          |                   |                   |                                                       |
| Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work) ... | 2     | 1        | -                 | 2                 | -                                                     |
| TOTAL ...                                                                        | 2     | 1        | -                 | 2                 | -                                                     |



Outwork

|                                  | No. of<br>out-workers<br>in August<br>list<br>required<br>by Section<br>110 (1)(c) | No. of<br>cases of<br>default<br>in sending<br>lists to<br>the Council | No. of<br>prosecu-<br>tions for<br>failure<br>to supply<br>lists | No. of<br>instances<br>of work in<br>unwhole-<br>some<br>premises | Notices<br>served | Prose-<br>cutions |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Wearing) Making<br>apparel) etc. | 2                                                                                  | -                                                                      | -                                                                | -                                                                 | -                 | -                 |
| ) Cleaning<br>) and<br>) Washing |                                                                                    |                                                                        |                                                                  |                                                                   |                   |                   |
| TOTAL ...                        | 2                                                                                  | -                                                                      | -                                                                | -                                                                 | -                 | -                 |

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

An epidemic of measles occurred during the months of July and August affecting the town and the surrounding country. Three hundred and forty seven cases were notified in the Minehead area. The bulk of the cases were of a mild type and there were no deaths.

Cases requiring institutional isolation are sent to Taunton Isolation Hospital.

Disinfection of premises after infectious disease is carried out by the Local Authority, also after cases of an unhygienic nature on receipt of a written request from the General Practitioner in attendance.

TUBERCULOSIS

There were three cases of Tuberculosis notified; there were no deaths.

HOSPITAL

The Minehead and West Somerset Hospital is entirely administered by the Bridgwater, Minehead and Butleigh Management Committee.

Local representations in the management of the Hospital exists in the House Committee of the Hospital on which the town is represented. This Committee is responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the Institution and is empowered to make recommendations and representations to the Committee of Management. The Committee of Management is represented on the Committee by three of its members.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

The Transport Service for Minehead and District is carried out by the St. John Ambulance Brigade from the Minehead St. John Ambulance Brigade Headquarters, under Station Officer E.S. Lamb, in accordance with an agency agreement with the Somerset County Council. Two ambulances and two sitting case vehicles are based on the Headquarters. The Station Officer has six full-time ambulance drivers under his supervision. The Minehead Nursing Division supplies the Nursing personnel for all journeys in which a nurse is required.

To demonstrate the work performed from the Minehead Headquarters and by its personnel, I have appended the following figures:-

|                       |     |     |        |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|--------|
| Miles travelled ...   | ... | ... | 72,787 |
| Journeys performed... | ... | ... | 3,107  |
| Patients conveyed ... | ... | ... | 9,669  |
| Accidents ...         | ... | ... | 66     |
| Emergencies ...       | ... | ... | 208    |
| Removals ...          | ... | ... | 9,370  |

In this context it should be realised that changes may be imminent in the administration of the Ambulance Transport in Somerset. It is possible that the present agency agreement between the Somerset County Council and the St. John Ambulance Brigade may cease in the near future.



CLINICS

## VITAL STATISTICS

## Infant Mortality Rates

- 8 -



Foods. The preparation of foods and their handling and transport are under constant observation by your Public Health Inspector. The premises and vehicles devoted to this work are also his particular care. No adverse reports have been received from him beyond a feeling of disappointment as to the future of the slaughtering and meat departments.

The retail display of food is rapidly improving to meet the universal demand in this direction.

Housing. In the report this is a matter of figures which show that the demand still exceeds the supply, but there is no doubt that the housing question is improving.

Factories. The attached report of your Public Health Inspector is satisfactory.

Care of the Sick. In view of the possible changes in the Ambulance Transport that seem to be pending, it would be advisable to keep this matter under your consideration.

Vital Statistics. There is nothing calling for special comment under this heading. The principal enemy to the general well-being of the community has undoubtedly been the weather. In spite of this there has been no increase in the death rate, but a slight fall.

The epidemic in measles was widespread, but there was no mortality connected with the outbreak.

Open Spaces. I am glad to be able to congratulate you on the general appearance of the town; the maintenance of open spaces and the extension of the Garden Walk in the Parks. This will undoubtedly be a very valuable acquisition to the town.

In conclusion I should like to congratulate all those who have helped in any way, be it large or small, to make Minehead the bright, clean and healthy town it appears.

To the Members of the Council my congratulations on their work during this very strenuous period.

To Mr. Sanders, the Town Clerk, who is my guide, philosopher and friend, in all matters requiring special knowledge of legal procedure or plain common sense in the affairs affecting the Council. My admiration for his efficiency and thanks for his kindness and help.

To my colleagues, Mr. Holman and Mr. Symes, my thanks, but they are specialists and recognise my difficulties and perhaps for the benefit of the town or perhaps because of my humility they have never denied me their help.

W. BAIN, M.B., B.S., Lond.,

Medical Officer of Health,

Brook House, Minehead.

Telephone: Minehead 19.

June, 1962.





